



AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR LIBERAL EDUCATION
1700 K Street NW, Suite 901, Washington DC 20006
(Tel) 202-452-8611 / (Fax) 202-452-8620
www.aale.org/charters
charters@aale.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: April 20, 2002

**CONTACTS: Jeffrey D. Wallin, AALE President, or William Craig Rice,
AALE Director of Education Assessment and Charter School Programs**

PRESS RELEASE:

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR LIBERAL EDUCATION ACCREDITS THE PRINCETON CHARTER SCHOOL

The American Academy for Liberal Education (AALE) announced today that it had granted accreditation to the Princeton Charter School, of Princeton, New Jersey. The AALE Board of Trustees voted to accredit the school at its April 20, 2002, meeting in Washington, DC.

Princeton Charter School, founded by parents in their New Jersey community in 1996, offers instruction from Kindergarten through the 8th grade. It is the first charter school to be accredited in the new Charter School Accreditation Program of the American Academy for Liberal Education. AALE is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an accreditor of liberal arts colleges and university programs. The new Charter School Accreditation Program is designed “to recognize public charter schools of high distinction” and insure that young people are prepared with the knowledge and skills required for liberal education in college.

To achieve AALE accreditation, charter schools must meet benchmarks that focus on educational and administrative excellence. They must demonstrate that they offer a content-rich academic curriculum in the arts and sciences to all students regardless of background, that they make proper use of assessments, including objective and high-stakes tests, and that they hire and promote teachers based primarily on how well students learn, rather than on certification status. AALE also requires evidence of stable, effective leadership and financial soundness.

The application process that Princeton Charter School has now completed involves several stages: initial meetings and consultations, a formal application and the writing of a rigorous self-study by the school, a site team visit by professional peers and education experts, a response to the team report, evaluation by the AALE Charter School Board of Review, and finally formal action by the AALE Board of Trustees.

“The Princeton Charter School has met our standards very well indeed—and in every stage of the accreditation process,” commented Jeffrey D. Wallin, president of the American Academy for Liberal Education. “We are pleased to count them as members, given their manifest commitment to an academically demanding program. We congratulate them on achieving the highest standards we are aware of in the whole realm of K-12 education.”

The American Academy for Liberal Education expects to review complete applications for accreditation from additional charter schools in the near future. These schools include the BASIS School in Tucson, Tempe Preparatory Academy, and KIPP Academy in Houston, with an additional twelve schools to follow from Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, and Texas.

###